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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

DR. FOREL, OF ZÜRICH.

TO THE EDITOR:

The following short account of the work of Dr. Forel is gladly sent in response to your request:

Outside of Switzerland, Dr. Forel's reputation is based largely on the fact that he is one of the greatest authorities on hypnotism, but a more intimate acquaintance with his work here brings other phases of it into equal prominence.

In appearance Dr. Forel is large and commanding, and shows in every movement the spirit of activity that is one of his most marked characteristics.

The medical department of the University of Zürich has attained a good reputation among German universities, and when vacancies occur, effort is made to secure the best men from abroad to fill them. A few years since Dr. Forel was called from Munich to occupy the position of professor of psychiatry in Zürich. In connection with this office, he gives two courses of lectures during the year, one on general psychiatry, and one on hypnotism, and also holds semi-weekly clinics. His lectures are very popular and well attended, and in the course on psychiatry he touches on many general subjects, which show how broad and far reaching his interests are. The opening lecture states his *Weltanschauung*. He is a pantheistic monist, believing in the existence of God as a universal force, of which life and matter are manifestations. He denounces with great vigor all anthropomorphic ideas of a personal God, and explains what is commonly called sin as being the result of a weak *Keimplasma*. He gives one lecture of the course on Weismann's theory of heredity, which he accepts. Among the most interesting of his lectures this year were one on brain localization, and one on disturbances of speech.

The clinics are attended by medical students, and, by special permission, by students of psychology. To the latter, these clinics furnish a fine opportunity for the study of pathological psychology, as Dr. Forel never fails to make the psychological significance prominent in the diagnosis of the cases examined. Among the rare cases presented this year was that of a patient suffering from paraphasia, with general paralysis of the muscles of the eye, on the same side as the brain trouble, causing the paraphasia. Only one other case of the kind has ever been known. Also a case of negative hallucinations of memory, the possibility of which was discovered a few years since by Bernheim, and several interesting cases of auditory and motor hallucinations.

In addition to his official position as professor of psychiatry, Dr. Forel is director of a large insane asylum in Burghölzli, a picturesque village about two miles from Zürich. Here he holds his clinics,

and here is his laboratory, which contains the largest collection of pathological brain material in Europe. He is most cordial to all who visit the asylum for scientific purposes, and very free in offering opportunities for study in his laboratory. Dr. Forel himself is making some special investigations in brain localization, and is quoted as authority in scientific works on brain anatomy. As director of the asylum, Dr. Forel is noticeable for the philanthropy which enters into all his relations with the insane. He studies to promote the comfort of even the most abandoned cases, and often patiently listens himself to the details of slight disagreements among them. His regimen for the patients is liberty and work, in so far as possible.

Dr. Forel's investigations in hypnotism are well known. His work on hypnotism is much superior to that of Moll, and is probably the best hand-book on the subject yet produced. He is also one of the editors of the *Zeitschrift für Hypnotismus*, published at Berlin. In his theories of hypnotism he belongs to Bernheim's school, although he opposes all dogmatism on the subject. He insists on accurate scientific methods in hypnotic research, and denounces the large class of psychologists who condemn hypnotism on *a priori* grounds, without having any experimental knowledge of it. His method of inducing hypnosis is short and quick. He causes the subject to look him fixedly in the eyes. Then, holding his thumb and finger before the two eyes of the subject and near, he bids him look at them, and drawing them down and away, the eyes diverge, and at the same time close, and the subject is asleep. On subsequent occasions a mere "*schlafen Sie*" is usually sufficient. The percentage of hypnotizable subjects Forel puts very high.—I think from 90 per cent. to 100 per cent. among normal persons. Despite the fact that an insane asylum is the most unfavorable place for the practice of hypnotism, Dr. Forel furnishes remarkable examples of its psycho-therapeutic value, and striking illustrations of the power of post-hypnotic suggestion. One cannot but think, however, that his success in the latter is due largely to the influence of his own strong personality. One feature of his use of hypnotism is his economy of labor in the insane asylum by its means, a course which has been opposed by his confrères, but the practical advantages of which they have been obliged to admit. One occurrence of the past year will illustrate this. An insane woman was expected to give birth to a child, and as on several previous occasions she had caused the death of her infants, the closest watch was required. Instead of providing night watchers, Dr. Forel hypnotized a waiting maid, and put her to sleep in an adjoining room, telling her to sleep quietly, but to awake and call the doctor should the woman be taken ill in the night. The waiting maid slept, undisturbed by the ordinary screaming of the insane woman, but awoke the moment that medical aid was required, and the life of the infant was thus saved.

In the city of Zürich Dr. Forel is well known as the president of the Temperance Society, a prominent member of the Society for Social Purity, and the leader in a movement to procure funds for the establishment of a People's Palace. He advocates total abstinence from alcoholic drinks with great vigor, and does not allow any use of alcohol in the insane asylum. He never fails in his clinics to emphasize the fact that a large proportion of the cases of insanity result from the prevalent use of *Schnapps* in Switzerland, and one of his most prominent lectures is a vigorous setting forth of the effect of alcohol on the brain tissue.

This short outline of Dr. Forel's work would not be complete without reference to his investigations in natural science. Among other studies in this direction, he has worked for years in collecting material in regard to the habits of ants. His library is full of books on the subject, and his published articles about ants and their habits are authoritative.

MARY MILLS PATRICK.

Zürich, April 20, 1894.

A CORRECTION.

EDITOR AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY:

Sir:—In the last number of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY, pp. 228-9, Mr. T. L. Bolton courteously gives me credit for suggesting the rhythm instrument there pictured and described. In doing so, however, he has fallen into error. The rhythm instrument is but a slight modification of a beat instrument used long ago by Prof. Alfred M. Mayer (*American Journal of Science*, 3rd Ser., VIII., 1874, 241; and XLVII., 1894, 5).

E. C. SANFORD.

The editors of *Mind* request that all MSS. from America, intended for publication in that journal, be forwarded to Prof. E. B. Titchener, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., instead of to Mr. Stout, as has hitherto been the case.